

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 RSR-01 /126 W

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R 241459Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 405

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 5989

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: GOWON TRAVEL PLANS INCLUDE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFFS JULY 23, SENIOR MEA OFFICIAL PROVIDED US INFORMAL REVIEW OF GOWON TRAVEL PLANS FOR COMING MONTHS. IN ADDITION GENERALLY, KNOWN(THOUGH NOT OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED) TRIPS SCHEDULED TO COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE IN OTTAWA EARLY AUGUST AND UNGA EARLY OCTOBER (USUN 2390), SOURCE NOTED THAT HEAD OF STATE HAS ONE OTHER TRIP FAIRLY FIRM AND TWO OTHERS ON TENTATIVE BASIS.

2. ACCORDING SOURCE, IT IS NOW ALMOST CERTAIN THAT GOWON WILL ATTEND NON-ALIGNED NATIONS CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS IN EARLY SEPTEMBER (PRESENTLY ANTICIPATED SEPTEMBER 518), THOUGH PERHAPS ONLY FOR ONE OR TWO DAYS. WHEN EMBOFFS EXPRESSED SURPRISE IN VIEW FACT FMG ALWAYS PREVIOUSLY REPRESENTED AT MINISTEIAL LEVEL, MEA OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THAT GOWON EVIDENTLY
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FEELS IT INCUMBENT ON HIM ATTEND PERSONALLY IN VIEW

HIS POSITION AS OAU CHAIRMAN. SOURCE ADDED THAT BOUMEDIENE HAS ALREADY SENT TWO DELEGATIONS TO LAGOS TO URGE GOWON'S PERSONAL ATTENDANCE.

3. OTHER TRIPS BEING CARRIED TENTATIVELY ON GOWON SCHEDULE ARE (A) HOPED-FOR STATE VISIT TO USSR, FOR WHICH PERIOD SEPTEMBER 14-21 HAS BEEN BLOCKED, THOUGH NO AGREEMENT ON DATED YET REACHED WITH SOVIETS AND (B) POSSIBLE VISIT TO KHARTOUM IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT MEETING OF OAU GOOD OFFICES COMMITTEE DEALING WITH ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI DISPUTE FOR WHICH AUGUST SESSION LIKELY THOUGH NO DATE HAS YET BEEN SET.

4. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE, SUDANESE PRESIDENT NIMEIRY SLATED TO PAY STATE VISIT TO NIGERIA LAST FEW DAYS OF AUGUST. (PROBABLY "IMPORTANT, NECESSARY" VISIT INDICATED LAGOS 5251).

5. COMMENT: NIGERIAN EMERGENCE ON INTERNATIONAL SCENE MOST RECENTLY REPORTED A-167 (AND LAGOS 5921) APPEARS LIKELY OCCUPY MUCH OF GOWON'S TIME IN NEXT FEW MONTHS AND PERHAPS THROUGHOUT YEAR OF HIS OAU CHAIRMANSHIP. AS SOURCE RUEFULLY REMARKED, GOWON ALSO BEARS RESPONSIBILITY FOR RUNNING NIGERIA, AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW MUCH HE WILL BE FORCED TO LET DOMESTIC RESPONSIBILITIES SLIP IN ORDER PERFORM HIS NEWLY-EXPANDED ROLE ON WORLD STAGE.
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